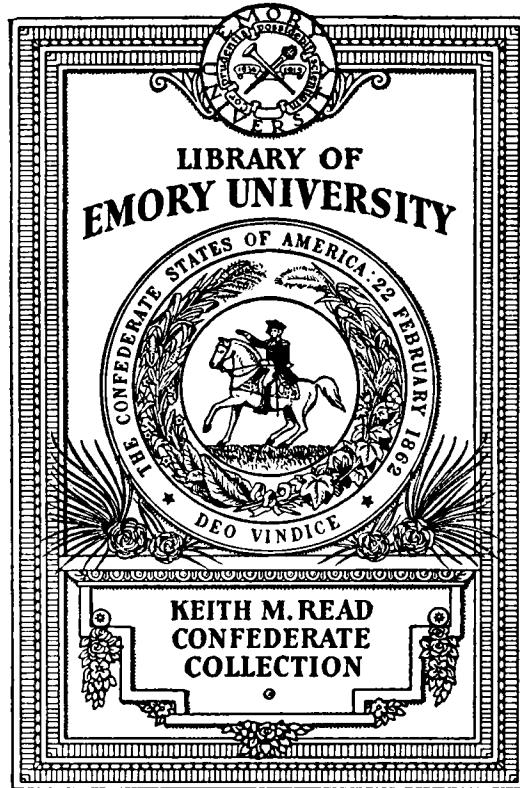


REMINISCENCES
OF THE
CHATHAM ARTILLERY

BY
CAPT. JOHN F. WHEATON.

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Very Respectfully
John F. Wheaton

REMINISCENCES
OF THE
CHATHAM ARTILLERY
DURING THE WAR 1861-1865,
BY
CAPT JOHN F WHEATON.

READ AT ARMORY HALL, MARCH 21ST, 1887.

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REMINISCENCES OF THE CHATHAM ARTILLERY.

The first service of the Chatham Artillery in the war of Secession was at Fort Pulaski. Under orders from Hon. Joseph E. Brown, Governor of Georgia, a detachment of the company—twenty-five rank and file—commanded by Capt. Joseph S. Claghorn, proceeded to the fort on the 3d day of January, 1861. That service continued for a period of three months, the detachment being relieved by details from the company every two weeks. The writer, then honored with the office of Second Corporal, was assigned to the first detachment, and served three separate terms—six weeks of the time the company was on duty there.

Those who participated in that service will not soon forget that pleasant and humorous campaign, the generous living and good cheer. Citizens, strangers and fellow-soldiers were entertained with a hospitality that had no limit. Wines and liquors were as free as water, and the cuisine of the messes would have done credit to any table, private or public. Then the hilarity and frolic that prevailed. Courts were instituted and accused members tried by juries of their peers, convicted and punished. There were no mistrials, and the dignity of the Court would have honored the Supreme

tribunals of this or any other land. Justice was meted out in no uncertain way. Woe to the individual who incurred the Court's displeasure! As an extreme penalty, he was sentenced to supply refreshments for the Court, the guard on duty, and the entire detachment for the full space of twenty-four hours, without rest or sleep, and at the expiration of his sentence had to run the gauntlet of all complaints, and was fortunate if he escaped a sentence for a second and like tour of duty. With all the conviviality the most perfect good feeling prevailed. It is not remembered that the least unpleasantness occurred. Each and every one vied with his fellow in his efforts to promote good fellowship and good feeling. The quarters were patterns for cleanliness, neatness and good taste, and the duties of the garrison performed with the precision and skill of regulars, eliciting the commendations and approval of the officers commanding the post. In addition to the regular routine of garrison duty, there was much labor performed in placing the fort in a condition for defense, and while the inestimable privilege of a soldier—growling—was indulged in to some extent, the work was done with alacrity, and well done.

Early in the month of April the volunteer forces at the fort were relieved from duty by the First Regiment Georgia Regulars. The detachment of the Chatham Artillery returned to the city and was dismissed.

On the first day of May, 1861, the company celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its organization with great enthusiasm, and made the largest parade in its history. An oration was delivered at the theatre by Lieut. C. C. Jones, Jr. The non-commissioned officers presented the company with a Confederate flag. The

presentation speech was made by Lieut. Julian Hart-ridge, and the flag received by Capt. Claghorn.

On the 31st day of July, 1861, the company—forty-eight rank and file—was mustered into the service of the Confederate States for the term of one year, under the following officers :

Joseph S. Claghorn, Captain.

Charles C. Jones, Jr., First Lieutenant.

Julian Hartridge, Junior First Lieutenant.

William M. Davidson, Second Lieutenant.

Bernardino Sanchez, Junior Second Lieutenant.

They proceeded to Fort Pulaski on the first day of August, and there commenced the service that terminated on Sunday, the 14th day of May, 1865. On the 30th day of September the company was relieved from duty at Fort Pulaski and ordered into camp at the Isle of Hope.

The change of quarters from Fort Pulaski to the Isle of Hope, and from the heavy artillery service to that of the light battery, was agreeable and much appreciated. An attractive camp was selected, a number of the members supplied themselves with private tents, and the company made comfortable. The facilities for obtaining supplies from the city enabled the men to live well, and the hospitality that the organization had so long been celebrated for was not neglected. Then the excitement of equipping the battery, procuring horses, enlisting stablemen and drivers, building stables, etc., etc., was also a pleasant change from the routine duties at the fort. Then came the daily field drills, that were both interesting and exhilarating. The regular routine of duty was: Drill at the manual of the piece from 7 A. M. to 8 A. M.; guard mounting at 8 A. M.; field drill

at 9:30 A. M., and company drill in the school of the soldier at 4 P. M. The camp guard consisted of one sergeant, two corporals and seven privates. Then picket duty—three privates at Skidaway Bridge, and one gun and a full detachment at Montmollin's Point. These duties, with police duty, procuring fuel, etc., occupied the entire day, and time passed pleasantly and rapidly. This routine continued during the entire time the company was at the Isle of Hope, interspersed occasionally by alarms from Skidaway Island, several of which occurred, on which occasions the battery moved promptly to that point and remained from one to two days, without any results except increased duties and the novelty of sleeping on the ground in the open air.

March 14th, 1862, Orderly Sergeant Thomas A. Askew was elected Junior Second Lieutenant, vice Bernardino Sanchez, resigned; Sergeant Wheaton promoted to Orderly Sergeant.

On April 4th Lieut. Julian Hartridge, having been elected a member of the Confederate States Congress, tendered his resignation, which was approved and accepted by the War Department.

In consequence of the evacuation of Skidaway Island by the Confederate forces the situation at the Isle of Hope was considered too exposed for the battery without an infantry support, and the company broke camp there and took position at Cedar Hammock. The time for which many of the troops who first entered the service enlisted was drawing towards a close. As an inducement for the men to re-enlist for three years, or the war, the Confederate Congress passed an Act permitting all troops that re-enlisted to reorganize and elect their commissioned officers. Under that authority



an election was held on the 16th day of May, which resulted in—

Joseph S. Claghorn being elected Captain ;
Charles C. Jones, Jr., First Lieutenant ;
John F. Wheaton, Junior First Lieutenant ;
Thomas A. Askew, Second Lieutenant ;
Samuel B. Palmer, Junior Second Lieutenant.

Lieut. Davidson declined to be a candidate for re-election.

The camp at Cedar Hammock lacked many of the comforts that had been enjoyed at the Isle of Hope, and the situation was not as pleasant or attractive. The company, however, had learned something of the life of a soldier, and they made themselves comfortable. The usual routine of daily drills and picket duty was continued.

June 7th (Lieut. Wheaton in command of the company), by orders from Department Headquarters, one section of the battery proceeded to Charleston, under command of Lieut. Askew, and participated in the engagement at Secessionville. After an absence of two weeks the section returned to the company.

June 11th—Vacated the camp at Cedar Hammock and camped at Causton's Bluff, in company with a brigade of infantry in command of Col. C. C. Wilson. The guard and picket duty there was severe, and the situation one of the most unhealthy in Chatham county. A large number of the men were made sick. Privates Wyly J. Cash and James Rafferty died in hospital at Savannah, August 7th, and Private W. H. Elliott at Cartersville, Ga., August 12th.

August 13th—Vacated camp at Causton's Bluff and camped at White Bluff. The change from Causton's

Bluff to White Bluff was as pleasant as that from Fort Pulaski to the Isle of Hope. A delightful and picturesque camp was selected. Comfortable quarters, mess houses, guard houses, harness racks, forage houses and stables were constructed, and the company was better situated and more comfortable than it had been at any time since entering the service. That camp was the Mecca of our soldier experience. Healthy, situated on a salt water river that abounded with fish and oysters, convenient and ample drill grounds in the immediate vicinity, there was nothing further to be wished for as far as the location was concerned.

August 25th—Private Chris Roberts died in Savannah.

The same routine of duty was continued at White Bluff that was inaugurated at the Isle of Hope. The company improved rapidly, and the perfection of drill was attained. As far as the writer's observation and knowledge extended the Chatham Artillery was then the equal in drill, if not the superior, of any battery in the service in this vicinity.

November 29th—Lieut. Charles C. Jones, Jr., was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of Artillery and assigned to duty at district headquarters at Savannah.

December 1st—Capt. Claghorn tendered his resignation to the War Department, which was accepted December 12th.

December 18th—Lieut. Wheaton was promoted to Captain, commission dated the 12th; Thomas A. Askew to First Lieutenant; Samuel B. Palmer to Junior First Lieutenant; G. A. Whitehead to Second Lieutenant, and G. N. Hendry elected to Junior Second Lieutenant; Sergeant Miller promoted to Orderly Sergeant.

These comprised the officers for the remainder of the war.

During the months of October, November and December there were frequent alarms from Coffee Bluff, to which the battery responded promptly, but no service except picket duty was required.

January 30th, 1863, by orders from district headquarters one section of the battery marched to King's Bridge, on the Ogeechee River, under command of Lieut. Askew, and one section to the vicinity of Fort McAllister, Genesis Point, under command of Lieut. Whitehead. Both sections returned to camp February 16 after two weeks' hard service. Then the daily drills, inspection every Sunday, and the usual routine of camp and picket duty continued.

Events of great significance were occurring with the armies in various sections of the country, and it was apparent to the careful observer that a battery so well equipped and so competent for service could not remain long in comparative idleness. At last, at sunset, July 9th, orders were received from department headquarters to march to the Central Railroad depot and proceed to Charleston. Good-bye, pleasant Camp Ashby, and good-bye all ease and comfort for the Chatham Artillery from that time until the war ended.

We marched from camp at 2 o'clock A. M. and reached the depot at daylight. The battery, battery wagon, forge, ambulance, four transportation wagons and more than one hundred horses and mules were safely loaded on the cars at 9:30 A. M. We arrived at the St. Andrews depot, opposite Charleston, at 8 o'clock P. M., reported at headquarters, and were ordered to proceed to James Island. We reported to Col. Simonton there

at daylight on the 11th. A camp was established for the artisans, cooks, battery wagon, forge, transportation wagons and spare horses within the lines of fortifications. That was christened Camp Simonton. That evening the battery marched to Secessionville, and was on outpost duty there two days, with horses harnessed and hitched up from sunset to sunrise: then to Artillery Cross Roads, with the same continuous service, night and day, without tents or shelter, except blankets, exposed to the hot July sun and frequent showers. On the night of July 16th one section of the battery was ordered to report to Col. Way, near Secessionville, and one section to Col. Radcliffe, at Artillery Cross Roads. The section that reported to Col. Way was held in reserve during a reconnoissance by the infantry forces, and did not fire a shot. The section that reported to Col. Radcliffe, with a section of Blake's South Carolina Battery and a force of infantry, marched to Grimball's Point, on the Stono River, and reached the Confederate picket line at early daylight. The infantry deployed to the right and left of the road and soon came up with and drove in the Federal pickets. As soon as the infantry had cleared the way the two sections of artillery started at a round trot and came into battery about four hundred yards from the frigate Pawnee and several gunboats that were anchored in the Stono River. Both sections opened fire on the Pawnee with shot and shell simultaneously, and while nearly every shot took effect the calibre of the guns was not sufficient to do serious damage. All the vessels opened fire on us, slipped their cables and moved rapidly down the river out of our range. We limbered up and took a position to the left of our first position, prepared for an attack from

the land forces. They had been taken care of by the infantry force and had been driven from the island. The artillery remained in their position for an hour under a heavy fire of shot and shell from the Federal fleet, but sustained no damage. Our section fired one hundred and four rounds in that engagement. The battery returned to camp on the 17th and had one night off duty—the first one since leaving Savannah.

On the 18th seven men were ordered to report at headquarters for duty as couriers, and a section ordered to Fort Johnson for outpost duty. That service continued, frequently the entire company being on outpost duty. July 29th Lieut. Askew and thirty men were ordered to Battery Wagner, Morris Island. That detachment was relieved from duty there August 11th by Lieut. Palmer and thirty men, and on August 25th Lieut. Palmer and detachment were relieved by Lieut. Askew and thirty men. That detachment was relieved September 2d. Battery Wagner was evacuated September 7th by the Confederate forces. In the annals of the war there was no service more trying to troops, and none that required greater endurance. The Chatham Artillery had its full share of it. With the evacuation of Battery Wagner came increased duties on James Island. The entire battery was on outpost duty most of the time, and there was no time until the battery left the Island that one section was not on exposed duty. The company's camp had remained as first established, without tents, and with only such shelter as blankets and the gun tarpaulins afforded. With the approach of cold weather Camp Simonton was vacated, and a more protected camp, called Camp Wheaton, established. There huts were constructed for the men.

and shelter for the horses, and the camp made comparatively comfortable. On November 4th, while the company was on outpost duty at Fort Johnson, the Hon. Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States, visited the Island and inspected and reviewed the battery. A salute was fired in his honor. Thus time passed, with the company continuously on duty, until February 8th, 1864. On that evening orders were received from Department Headquarters to proceed to Savannah and report to Gen. Gilmer.

We marched from camp at 11 o'clock p. m., and at daylight on the 9th the battery was loaded on the cars at the St. Andrews depot. There was delay in leaving owing to a demonstration by the enemy on Johns Island, and an order from Headquarters to hold the battery in readiness to march to that point. Finally, at 11 o'clock, we were ordered to proceed, and arrived at Savannah at 1 o'clock a. m. on the 10th, and by order of Gen. Gilmer marched to Camp Ashby, at White Bluff, and took possession of the quarters that had been vacated on the departure of the company for Charleston.

Thursday, February 11th, soon after 7 o'clock p. m., orders were received from District Headquarters to report with the battery at the Atlantic & Gulf Railroad depot at daylight on the 12th, and proceed by cars to Lake City, Florida, and report to Gen. Finnegan. There was delay in procuring the necessary transportation, but it was at last obtained. The battery was loaded and we left Savannah at 11 o'clock a. m. The bridge over the Withlacoochee River, between Valdosta and Quitman, had been carried away by a freshet, which compelled us to stop at Valdosta. We arrived there at

4 o'clock A. M., on the 13th, unloaded the battery, and at 8 A. M. started on the march across the country, and reached Madison, Florida, Sunday, the 14th, at 12 o'clock M. Loaded the battery on the cars Sunday evening, and left Madison at 9 o'clock P. M., reaching Lake City early the following morning. The enemy were then making demonstrations in various places in the vicinity, and it was uncertain what the plan of the campaign would be until Wednesday, February 16th. On that evening orders were received to load the battery on the cars and proceed to Olustee Station. We arrived at Olustee at daylight on Thursday morning and were ordered to report to Gen. Colquitt, who had reached Olustee that morning. We made our quarters in the pine woods, a short distance from Gen. Colquitt's headquarters. One section of the battery was ordered on outpost duty, under command of Lieut. Palmer, and remained on that duty until Saturday morning, when it was relieved and returned to camp. Early on that day the enemy's cavalry were reported to be advancing from Sanderson, destroying the railroad. Col. Clinch's regiment of Georgia cavalry and a regiment of Florida cavalry were ordered to the front to check their advance and ascertain their strength. In the skirmish that ensued Col. Clinch was wounded and the cavalry retreated. At that time it was not believed that a general engagement was imminent. Later in the day further reports were received, that the enemy were advancing in force with cavalry, artillery and infantry, and the 19th and 64th Georgia and 11th South Carolina regiments, and Gamble's Florida battery, were ordered to the front. At 12 o'clock one section of our battery was also ordered to the front. On our way we were

joined by the 6th, 23d, 28th and 32d Georgia regiments and a detachment of the 1st Georgia Regulars. After we had advanced about two miles we were greeted with a shot from one of the enemy's rifle pieces, which passed directly over our heads and killed a private of the 32d Georgia, and did other damage. At that moment a courier from Gen. Colquitt reached me with orders to move the battery out of the road and report to him in person. I reported promptly, and was ordered to post our guns on the right of Gamble's battery, and as Capt. Gamble ranked me, to govern my movements by his, but to use my judgment in directing our fire, unless otherwise ordered. At that time there was heavy artillery firing from the enemy, and musketry firing on the skirmish lines. I galloped to my command and moved the battery rapidly to the position designated. While we were going into battery, Gamble's battery fired the first artillery shot from the Confederate side. We opened fire promptly. The infantry had also gotten into position and the firing on both sides became general. After firing a few rounds it was noticed that the infantry had advanced, and thinking it time to advance our section I looked to the left to see where Gamble's battery was, and discovered it was in great confusion. The horses had become unmanageable and were running down the road at full speed with the limbers and caissons and without drivers. That battery had ceased firing. We limbered up and advanced rapidly to a position about fifty yards in front and one hundred yards to the left of our first position. The battle had commenced in earnest. The fighting was hard and determined, and for some time it was difficult to say which side had the advantage. The enemy had

sixteen pieces of artillery on the field, while on the Confederate side our section was the only artillery then in action. Feeling that that was too great a disparity I sent a courier to Gen. Colquitt and requested permission to send for our left section, which was granted. The enemy held on for awhile but finally gave way and we advanced about two hundred yards. There the enemy again resisted stubbornly, their batteries being less than five hundred yards distant. By direction of Gen. Colquitt we concentrated our fire upon one of the Federal batteries on our right. The infantry advanced and in a short time that battery was disabled and two of its guns captured. On this part of their line the enemy broke in confusion, but in the center and on our left they were still offering a vigorous resistance. Similar attention was paid to their artillery on other parts of their line. The infantry charged and the enemy retreated at all points, leaving three more of their pieces in our possession. We again advanced rapidly, unlimbered and fired a few shots, then advancing again went into battery in the position we occupied until the close of the engagement. Here reinforcements reached the enemy, and it was all that could be done to hold the ground gained. Just then our left section arrived on the field. It did not come a moment too soon. The right section had expended nearly all its ammunition, and there would have been a serious break if the artillery firing had ceased. The infantry also had expended the ammunition from their cartridge boxes, and from some unexplained cause the ordnance wagons were not at hand. The infantry acted with great gallantry, but on some parts of the line were forced to give way. Our fire continued and was rapid and effective. t

was directed to such parts of the enemy's line as appeared to be the most aggressive and caused the most damage. At times it was concentrated at one point and again distributed as circumstances seemed to render necessary. Our position was at the Confederate center, and at that time as far in advance as any part of the line. Gen. Colquitt rode up and ordered me to retire our guns further to the rear. I replied: "General, I think we can hold on where we are for some time; it certainly can not be long before the ordnance wagons will be up, and their arrival will change the situation." He replied: "I am afraid you will lose your guns." I answered, that if he would permit me I would take that risk; that "our men could be relied upon." The General responded: "Very well, but be sure you don't lose your pieces." Soon after, the 27th Georgia, a Florida Battalion and Bonaud's Georgia Battalion, that had been held in reserve, came up. The ammunition for the infantry arrived at nearly the same time and the fight was renewed with great enthusiasm. The annals of the war do not record more heroic fighting than was done by the 27th Georgia. That regiment moved like a wall of fire, and every inch it gained it held. Bonaud's Battalion and the Florida Battalion also did their part well. The entire army appeared to appreciate the situation and the fighting on every part of the line was desperate. At that time one section of Guerard's Battery and one piece of Gamble's Battery came on the field. Capt. Guerard's section took a position on our left, and the piece from Gamble's Battery about one hundred and fifty yards in our rear. Both commenced firing and did good service. The contest was desperate, and for some time the result was doubt-

ful. At length the enemy's left began to waver and soon broke badly. Their right and center redoubled their efforts to retrieve their losses on the left, and there were instances of gallantry on the part of Federal officers that could not be excelled. The success on the Confederate right encouraged our forces and every man went at them with a will. As the enemy were making a determined effort to keep their left center up, a solid shot from the Chatham Artillery cut down a large pine tree that fell directly in their midst, causing a confusion from which that part of the line never recovered. Our infantry charged and the enemy gave way at all points. The field was won. The Chatham Artillery expended all the ammunition from its own chests and fired seventy rounds from the chests of Capt. Guerard's section. The fight commenced about 1 o'clock and ended at twilight. Except in numbers it was, from beginning to end, a fair stand-up fight in an open piney woods country, without shelter or protection for either side.

When the pursuit was over we were ordered to collect such of the enemy's artillery as was left on the field and return to camp. We took in three of the five captured pieces, two of which we retained by order of the commanding General, and they were finally surrendered at Greensboro, North Carolina, at the close of the war.

A detail from the company, with two transportation wagons, were engaged all that night and the following day in caring for and removing the wounded and gathering stores and ammunition from the field. The Confederate loss in the engagement was ninety-five killed and eight hundred and thirty wounded; that of the Federals was four hundred killed and about sixteen

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hundred wounded. The part that the Chatham Artillery performed in the engagement was recognized by the General commanding, the army, and the country at large.

On Monday, February 22d, we marched to the St. Marys River and thence to Baldwin, reaching there on the 24th. The line of march from Olustee to Baldwin was strewn with debris from the retreating Federal army. Disabled transportation wagons, ordnance and quartermaster's stores lined the entire distance. We marched from Baldwin on the 29th to a point about eight miles distant towards Jacksonville and camped on a high pine ridge, that was named Camp Milton, in honor of the Governor of Florida. The enemy's pickets were about three miles distant in our front. With a view to greater security and a more defensible picket line, a reconnoissance of their position was ordered. The 11th South Carolina, the 23d and 27th Georgia Regiments of infantry, the 5th Regiment of Georgia cavalry, a Battalion of Florida cavalry, and our Battery, all under command of Col. Zachary, of the 27th Georgia, were selected for that duty. The command marched from camp early on the morning of March 1st and came up with the enemy's forces—infantry, artillery and cavalry—about half-past seven o'clock, and after a short engagement routed them. They retreating to the east side of a considerable stream called Cedar Creek, it was considered important to have full information of that situation, and a further advance was ordered. The passage over the creek led through a narrow defile, thickly wooded on both sides, and it was impassable at any other point in that vicinity. From such observations as could be made and from the best

information that could be obtained from a farmer, near whose house we halted, it was believed that the enemy was in force on the summit of the elevated ground directly on the other side of the creek. Our Battery was ordered to advance and deploy in an old field to the right of the road and shell that position. We moved at a sharp gallop, reached the point designated, opened fire and shelled the entire vicinity. The infantry and part of the cavalry advanced and a sharp fight ensued, resulting in a loss to the Confederates of ten killed and thirty wounded. The enemy were routed and retreated to Jacksonville. The picket line was established on the creek and the reconnoissance was ended. The troops returned to camp and were congratulated by the army on their success.

Nothing out of the usual routine occurred from that time until the 1st of April. On that day the Battery, with two regiments of infantry, was ordered to Baldwin and from thence to Waldo. Information had been received that a force from the Federal army had left Jacksonville in transports for Palatka, with a view of raiding Middle and Southern Florida. The object of the expedition was to intercept and prevent that purpose being accomplished.

We reached Baldwin at 9 o'clock A. M. Lieuts. Askew and Hendry and forty-four men, with the horses and transportation wagons, marched through the country and reached Waldo on Sunday, the 3d, at twilight. The Battery and other officers and men left Baldwin by train at 2 o'clock P. M. and reached Waldo about 8 o'clock P. M. Sunday, occupying thirty-two hours in travelling thirty-eight miles.

The Federal expedition returned to Jacksonville

without making any demonstration. We left Waldo April 6th, arrived at Baldwin on the 7th, and marched to Camp Milton that day.

While at Waldo a number of the men discovered a still that converted sorghum cane into rum, which, fresh from the still, was more dangerous than Yankee bullets. Several were badly wounded, but eventually recovered.

During the absence of the company from Camp Milton our quarters were left in charge of a single guard, who had the indiscretion to capture a Florida pig that was found roaming in the vicinity. He had the misfortune to be detected and suffered the penalty of having a placard with the word "thief" written on it attached to him and marched through the camp to the tune of the Rogue's March. The company felt the disgrace of that act seriously. It was, however, somewhat relieved by the fact that the transgressor was a recruit recently from the conscript camp, and had not learned that it was an offense to steal, *and be detected in the theft*, when other means of procuring subsistence were limited.

On the 18th day of April orders were received for Colquitt's Brigade, Guerard's Battery and our Battery to return to Georgia. The command marched from Camp Milton at sunrise on the 19th, Col. Zachary in command, and made a forced march of about thirty miles that day. At dusk, in crossing a rapid and deep creek the bridge broke down and dumped our last caisson into the creek. The Battery wagon, forge, transportation wagons and Guerard's Battery were still in the rear. The caisson had to be recovered and the bridge rebuilt before they could cross. Unaided by

either those in front or those in the rear this work was accomplished. Large trees were cut from the forest for stringers and the bridge rebuilt, and at 11 o'clock our last carriage had crossed. This work did not relieve the fatigue of the long march. It did give us an appetite for our cornbread supper and help us to sleep soundly.

We were up before daylight on the morning of the 20th, had our breakfast and day's rations cooked, and were on the march at sunrise. We reached the St. Marys River at midnight, ferried the battery across the river to Trader's Hill, and at 3 o'clock A. M. we retired to sleep; rested until midday on the 21st, then continued the march and arrived at Tebeauville on Sunday, April 23d. We remained there until the following Monday noon, then loaded the battery on the cars and arrived at Savannah at daylight Tuesday morning. We remained in Savannah until 5 P. M. and then proceeded to Charleston, arriving there at 8 o'clock A. M. April 26th, and were ordered to James Island. The men and animals were rested twenty-four hours at the St. Andrews depot, then marched to the Island and located our camp about one hundred yards below the camp we occupied before going to Florida. The situation on the Island was more critical than it had been previous to our leaving for Florida. We were required to furnish details of twenty-four men daily as couriers at the signal station and headquarters, and guards at the Dill's Bluff bridge, the ordnance and commissary depots. And, in addition, to send one section to Fort Johnson for picket duty at night. These details embraced the entire company, the men who came off guard duty in the morning had to go on picket duty at night. Thus

the time passed. The enemy threatening at some point on the Island almost daily, requiring constant vigilance and continuous service.

On the 2d day of July they made a demonstration in force, driving in our advanced pickets and capturing a section of Blake's Battery, which was on picket at River's Causeway. At the same time that the attack was made at River's Causeway they pushed forward a force at Grimball's Causeway and drove in our pickets there. While retaining possession of the Causeway, they deployed two columns to the right and left and crossed the marsh and forced our reserves to retire. At that juncture our Battery was ordered to the front. We started from Fortification No. 2, near the church, down the Grimball road, moving rapidly, and took position in the rear of our skirmish line, opened fire and soon brought the enemy to a halt. The Federals had no artillery, but had a number of rocket batteries, that produced no effect other than frightening our horses. We held our position and shelled their lines during the day. A Federal gunboat in the Stono River returned the compliment by shelling our position from morning until night, but did no damage. Soon after dark we were ordered to retire within the line of fortifications.

On the 12th a reconnoissance was ordered for the purpose of driving the enemy across the marsh, back to the peninsula they occupied previous to their advance. The column moved before daylight under command of Col. Harrison, of the 32d Georgia, with an infantry force of about six hundred men and one section of Blake's Battery and one section of our Battery. As the ground between Grimball's and River's Causeways was impracticable for the movements of artillery, we

selected positions where we could cover the field of operations and prepared for action. The infantry deployed and swept in line of battle over the ground recently occupied by the enemy. They had evacuated the Island the previous night and the Confederate picket line was re-established on the margin of the marsh. The position selected for the artillery, and which they were ordered to hold until relieved, was in full view of the frigate Pawnee, two monitors and six gunboats that were anchored in the Stono River. The entire fleet opened fire on us soon after sunrise and continued their fire until we retired. Not hearing from Col. Harrison, it was decided at 9 o'clock to retire the caissons within the lines. That drew off a portion of the fire temporarily, but it was soon concentrated on our position again. We endured it until 11 o'clock, and then retired, marching by the Grimball road in direct line with the fleet, in a shower of shot and shell, and, strange to relate, sustained no damage, not a man or a horse received an injury. We had been continuously on duty from the time the enemy came on the Island, with our horses harnessed and ready to move at a moment's notice. On the eleventh day we returned to camp. We rested that day, and at night resumed the picket, guard and courier duty.

On the 2d day of September one section of the Battery, under command of Lieut. Palmer, was ordered to the Charleston Race Course, as a guard to a camp of Federal prisoners that had been established there. It continued on that duty two weeks and was then relieved and returned to the Island.

November 14th, Private John C. Maguire died in hospital at Charleston.

On the 5th day of December we were ordered to the St. Andrews depot to take the cars for Green Pond Station, Charleston and Savannah Railroad, and to march from thence to the south side of the Combahee River and occupy an earthwork that protected the bridge crossing that river. That change was decidedly pleasant. The rations issued on James Island had been meagre, consisting of cornbread made from meal in which the cob had been ground with the corn, sorghum syrup, and miserably poor country beef once a week. Forage for horses had also long ceased to be adequate. Here, on the contrary, we found poultry, pork, beef, rice and sweet potatoes in abundance, and forage for our horses. The planters were removing their negroes to safer localities, and their generous stores were freely bestowed on the members of the company.

On the 15th day of December one section of the Battery, under the command of Lieut. Askew, was ordered to Old Pocataligo. On the following day the company was ordered to vacate the earthwork at the Combahee River and occupy Battery Means on the Ashepoo River. The enemy failing to advance at Old Pocataligo, as anticipated, the section under command of Lieut. Askew was ordered, on November 22d, to join the company at Battery Means.

December 24th, Private George W Wilkes died in hospital at Charleston.

On that day the company was relieved from duty at Battery Means and ordered to Chisholmville. On reaching Chisholmville, on the evening of the 24th, information reached us that Savannah had been evacuated by the Confederate forces and that the enemy were in force in that city. That information caused great

anxiety. A large majority of the company were from Savannah, and their families and friends resided there. They were cut off from all communication with their loved ones at home, and all information in regard to them from that time until the close of the war.

We remained at Chisholmville until New Year's Eve at 9 o'clock, then marched to Green Pond Station, and on the following day, January 1st, 1865, commenced the march for Charleston. We arrived at James Island on the 5th and occupied the camp vacated early in December and resumed the usual routine of duty.

On the 3d day of February, at 10 o'clock p. m., we were ordered to proceed to Charleston and take the cars for Branchville. We marched from camp at 12 o'clock midnight and reached the South Carolina Railroad depot at 5 o'clock a. m. We left Charleston at 10 o'clock and arrived at Branchville the same evening and reported to Gen. Stevenson. We marched from Branchville to Orange Court House on the 6th, and posted the Battery to command the bridge crossing the Saltkahatchee River at that point. The enemy failing to cross the river there, we were ordered to proceed to Columbia. We marched from Orange Court House on the 8th and arrived at Columbia at 10 o'clock a. m. on the 10th, and were assigned to duty with Butler's Division of Hampton's Cavalry Corps. On the evening of the 15th the enemy were directly in our rear. There had been sharp skirmishing through the day. At 10 o'clock p. m. we moved across the Congaree River and marched to Granby, two miles south of Columbia, and posted the Battery on the bank of the river and shelled the Federal camp that entire night. At daylight on the 16th we retired the guns to the rising ground, a short dis-

tance in the rear of the position occupied during the night, and shelled the enemy's columns as they marched from their camp. Our fire was so annoying that a large force of their infantry was marched under cover of the growth of trees and bushes on the bank to a point directly across the river from our position, where they were protected by a levee, and opened a heavy fire on us. We threw up small earthworks to protect the cannoniers and continued our fire, retiring the caissons and limbers to the rear under cover of the hill. Corporal O'Byrne and Privates Lovell and Tierney were wounded, and thirteen of the Battery horses and one officer's horse were also wounded. At midday a regiment of infantry came to our support and the fight was then on more even terms. The regiment was relieved at dark and marched to Columbia. The Battery retained its position during the following night, with horses harnessed and ready to march at short notice. At 7 o'clock A. M. on the 17th orders were received to march promptly through Columbia to the Saluda Mills and take a position to prevent the enemy crossing the river at that point. We were on the road within ten minutes from the time the order was received. As we approached Columbia and was within about five hundred yards of the State House, a courier reached us with the information that the Federal army was then crossing the river and that the main street of the city was swarming with their soldiers at that moment, and gave us an order to countermarch the battery and make our way around the city and join the Confederate army at Killian's Mills, or at the first point practicable, as early as possible. There was no time lost in obeying that order. Our movements in the opposite direction

were not delayed by the appearance of Sergeant Gray, he having preceded the Battery in the march to Columbia by permission, and his directing our attention to a squad of Federal soldiers then in full view. The chances for escaping capture appeared desperate; cut off from the army in a strange country, without any knowledge of the roads except that to be obtained from a small pocket map, and the enemy directly upon us. We determined, however, not to surrender without a struggle. Every precaution possible was taken for our defense, and then commenced one of the toughest day's marches in our experience. There was not a minute's rest. Supplies, tents, cooking utensils and everything not absolutely necessary for our existence, were thrown from the wagons, and the men and animals urged to their utmost limit of speed and endurance. Fatigued as the men were by forty-eight hours of constant service, without rest and with scanty rations, there was more or less straggling, and no appeals or exertions that the officers were capable of, or the representation that any delay involved certain capture, was sufficient to induce those in the rear to make greater exertions. As a consequence, ten of the men fell into the enemy's hands. By good fortune the remainder of the company escaped and joined the army at Killian's Mills between 10 and 11 o'clock that night. The enemy were near to and around us the entire day, and as night came on their camp fires could be seen in our close proximity in all directions. We managed to give the Battery horses the necessary attention and then lay down on the ground, without supper, to sleep and rest. We were up before day on the morning of the 18th, and after a hasty breakfast and cooking rations, were prepared for another

er day. Soon after sunrise the Battery, with a brigade of cavalry, were ordered into position to hold the enemy in check, to gain time to allow the transportation trains to get well out of the way. The enemy advanced a skirmish line and deployed the head of their column in line of battle. We shelled them for two hours, then limbered up and continued the retreat. We halted at Ridgeway Station for an hour at 1 P. M. to rest and feed the horses, and then marched the remainder of that day and the following night. We halted at daylight the 19th to cook rations and feed and rest the horses.

In the retreat from Killian's Mills our wagons became separated from the company and we were entirely without provisions or cooking utensils. We had to rely on the generosity of our fellow soldiers for the scanty breakfast we had that morning. We marched at 9 o'clock and came up with our wagons at Winsboro at noon. There we found supplies of bacon and corn, halted and loaded the wagons to their fullest capacity, and for the first time in a number of days enjoyed an ample meal. We marched from Winsboro at 2 o'clock, halted at dark, and continued the march the 20th and 21st, and on the 22d forded the Catawba River at Land's Ford in a heavy driving storm of rain; continued the march on the 23d and camped three miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina, at 4 o'clock on the 24th, the rain falling in torrents and the men drenched to the skin. We marched to Charlotte on the 25th and camped near that place. We remained at Charlotte until the 6th of March, and were then ordered, with a force of cavalry, to proceed to Raleigh, one hundred and seventy-five miles distant. The rains had continued almost incessantly, and the red clay roads were in a fear-

ful condition. The horses frequently bogged to their shoulders. The progress was slow and attended with many difficulties. We floundered through the mud day after day and reached Greensboro on the 12th. Halted there one day to shoe the Battery horses. Matched from Greensboro on the 14th and reached the Yadkin River at 11 o'clock, and found it so high that it could not be forded. We procured a flat and ferried the Battery across the river piece by piece—this work occupying that day. We marched from the Yadkin on the 15th and reached the town of Chapel Hill at noon. That place proved an oasis. The people welcomed us to their homes, entertained us generously and filled our haversacks with well-cooked, substantial food. We left them with grateful hearts and proceeded on the march and camped at dark for the night in the immediate vicinity of a large seminary for females. The professors of the institution called at our camp and were offered such hospitality as our scanty supplies afforded. In return we were invited to visit the seminary, and before we left for the night the writer was in doubt as to the outcome of the visit. It appeared to be uncertain whether the young ladies would become members of the company or the members of the company would join the seminary. It was a delightful and charming episode in our fatiguing and disagreeable march. We marched at daylight, the 16th, in a deluge of rain. In crossing a branch which, in ordinary weather, was a small stream, but now swollen to a broad and rapid river, as we were about to halt for the night, the bridge broke down, and our last carriage, the forge, capsized upside down into the water, dumping the anvil, smith's tools and our supply of horseshoes and horseshoe nails

to the bottom of the river. The writer will not attempt to describe his feelings at that moment. Suffering with a high fever since 10 o'clock, his clothing saturated with rain, and fatigued to the very limit of human endurance, it seemed to him that the end had come. Then realizing that the emergency must be met, a spark of courage came. A detail of the most able men was made and the remainder of the company directed to proceed to the camp that had been previously selected. The detail took in the situation at a glance. It was hard, heavy work in the water and under the water, and there was no escaping it. The men worked without flinching, and in three hours' time the forge was on the road again, the tools and the most of the material recovered, and we were on the march to camp, where we soon joined the company. As I was dismounting from my horse the orderly sergeant reported that there was not a man of the command that was able to do guard duty. I replied: "Very well, sergeant, let them rest; we will take the chances of our horses being stolen and will hope to be in a better condition in the future." That was the only night from the commencement of our service to the end that there was not a regular guard on duty in our camp. We marched at daylight on the 17th, halted at night, and arrived at Raleigh at noon on the 18th. Rested until the 20th, and then marched towards Smithville.

As we were approaching that place, on the 22d, we were met by a courier with orders to return to Raleigh and await further orders there. We arrived at Raleigh on the 24th and camped near the city. On the 26th we were ordered to Hillsboro. Marched from Raleigh on the 27th and camped near Hillsboro on the 29th. We

remained there until April 6th, and were then ordered to proceed to Smithville and report to Gen. Johnston. We marched from Hillsboro at sunrise and arrived at Smithville on the 9th, and were assigned to Gen. Loring's Division, Stewart's Corps. On the morning of the 10th the army commenced the retreat on the route towards Georgia. We passed through Raleigh on the 12th, Hillsboro on the 14th, Durham on the 15th, and halted six miles east of Greensboro on the 16th. We remained there until the morning of the 25th, then marched to a point four miles southwest of Greensboro, halted and remained there until the army finally surrendered. Regular muster rolls were made out, showing a total of one hundred and three rank and file present. They were handed to the Federal officer authorized to receive them, and blank paroles returned, that were afterwards filled up with the names of the officers and men, signed by the captain and distributed, when the company disbanded. The Battery and horses were turned in to the United States Quartermaster on the 2d day of May.

By the terms of the surrender officers were permitted to retain their private arms and horses, and all regular organizations their transportation. That left us two six-mule, one four-mule and one two-mule wagon and one two-mule ambulance and eight officers' horses with which to get to Augusta, a march of more than three hundred miles through a country denuded of everything to sustain either man or beast. Rations for the men were to be supplied by the Federal Commissary Department on our arrival at Saulsbury, but we were left entirely to our own resources for a supply of forage. We marched from Greensboro with the army early on the

morning of the 3d, and reached Saulsbury at 9 o'clock A. M. on the 5th. Much to our disappointment the train with the rations had not arrived, and no definite information could be obtained in regard to it. The army halted to await its arrival. As hour after hour passed without its making an appearance the troops became impatient and soon after midday a large number of them resumed the march. At sunset the only commands that remained were parts of three regiments of infantry, a detachment of dismounted cavalry and our company. Soon after dark the whistle of the engine was heard, and a few minutes later the train rolled up to the station. We reported to the officer in command and were supplied with liberal rations of pork, hard-tack and coffee, sufficient to carry the men to their homes. The wagons were loaded and at 8 o'clock we continued the march. We halted for the night at 10 o'clock, marched again at daylight on the 6th, and reached Charlotte at 10 o'clock on Sunday, the 7th. A garrison of Federal soldiers had preceded us there. The principal stores had been sacked and there was great confusion and disorder. We passed through the city and halted for the purpose of procuring feed and forage for the animals.

In surrendering the Battery we retained a side of harness leather, a small quantity of manilla rope and some horseshoes and horseshoe nails. With these, negotiations were commenced with the agent of the Southern Express Company for the feed required. After some parley *ante bellum* prices were agreed upon and an exchange made. A balance against us was paid from a ten-dollar gold piece the writer had preserved for contingencies since the early part of the war. We then

had ample supplies to carry us to Augusta. We marched from Charlotte about 4 o'clock that evening, halted for the night at 8 o'clock, and continued the march on the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th, and arrived at Hamburg, opposite Augusta, at 2 o'clock p. m. Sunday, the 14th day of May. During the march the company organization was retained intact, guard duty regularly performed, and discipline and good order maintained. The rations for the men and forage for the animals had enabled the company to march rapidly, and we were amongst the first troops from Gen. Johnston's army that reached Hamburg.

The writer left the camp at daylight on the 14th and preceded the company for the purpose of reporting to the Federal officer in command at Augusta. He reported at headquarters at 11 o'clock a. m. After waiting an hour an interview with Gen. Mollineaux was accorded and he was ordered to furnish that officer with a schedule of the transportation animals and wagons in his charge and turn them over to the Federal Quartermaster when called for. That order was a surprise, as it had been understood from the order of Gen. Johnston permitting the transportation to be taken to our homes that it was to be retained for the benefit of the company. I recrossed the river to Hamburg, and after consulting the officers it was decided to disband the company without delay. Accordingly rations were issued sufficient to carry the men to their homes. The company mustered, ninety-three men answering to their names. Gen. Mollineaux's order in regard to the transportation was explained, the paroles distributed, and the company formally disbanded as a Confederate organization.

The story is ended. If the transportation animals were called for I have not been informed of it. There may be those present who know more of the disposition made of them than I do.



